(45)

16 March 1909

The Lizard.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Tuesday

My Billy.

It is consoling, if true, to hear that you would have developed influenza before this if you had been going to. Still, do take care & don't run any avoidable risks. You know I shall have to come & nurse you if you are ill & how will you like that? I hope that isn't too much trouble to give proper attention to Adrian. Not

Ha ha distressing about your explosive. Where must you have it? How dreadful.

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It's too distressing about Ly Ripon - Wasn't you have it? How dreadful -

I think he's really very
good & does take great
care when there's any need
for it. Of course he is
fearfully busy which is
rather a drawback. Tell
me all he says & let me
honestly how you are. Thank
goodness we shall soon
be within reach now.
Today there has been
gorgeous sunshine & the
snow is melting. but it is

still very cold except in the sun. However there it is so deliciously hot that I actually sat out in it with the virtuous intention of getting all the good I could out of Lizard air for some time this morning. I have of course no news, except that I had an amusing letter from Lytton. You have been talking to him today & I hope tomorrow I shall hear what he said & what you said & how Platonic

you write are. I wrote him a very dull letter - but I feel it doesn't much matter now. He is a charming person & these brilliant boys seem to favour us in spite of all our Stephen Saucheries - & mine rather for I don't know why you should be labelled into literary saucheries. What a very odd talk you seem to have had with Saxon. I can't believe that that mild little man is really a Sadist or whatever it's called. I always forget to thank you for the (love for Sendes the map - Give my love to Adrian

Yours ever VW.

T. PARSONS 3.2.73

(46)

19 March (1909)

The Lizard.

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Wednesday.

My Billy.

You have been very good about writing. Do you do it properly I wonder & work after your self? As far as we can make out from the Westminster half London seems to have got influenza. I took upon it as a good sign that Adrian Stephen had a bad doctor for evidently had decided think

there was very much the
matter with him. I suppose
he is overwhelmed by all
his stray influenza patients.
Is Walter Lamb going to
propose to you? I should
prefer him as a husband
(or brother-in-law) to H. G.
but I shouldn't take him
till I was well over 30.
I sometimes think I
should like to live in the
country but of course I

shouldn't really. Still there is something engagingly simple about not having to consider any one's dining, but one's own. We Ottolines ask me to tea & we Violet & Nelly to go & see - only the question of where we shall walk to be considered. Also it's very beautiful. The snow has almost all melted now. Yesterday it was wonderful in the sun against a real Cornish blue sea the wind unluckily has got up again but at last

it is a West wind.

Why should you consult me about your plate? Of course I can tell you that I think you are the last person in the world to have anything that will want keeping in order. What will happen? Your catastrophes will no doubt add an amusement to many dinner parties. But it is really too damnable to have to give up Italy for it. Couldn't you put it off for a year? You'll be married by then & won't want to go abroad. I must now write to Adrian. Yours VB.

(47)

Good Friday 9 April. 1909?

Telegraph and Station } Seend.

CLEEVE HOUSE,
MELKSHAM,
WILTS.

Friday

My Billy

What has brought about this sudden change of plan? I suppose I shall hear to-morrow morning. Anyhow it is very sensible of you & I leave you to imagine our delight. You are asked to come here now. But as I can't send this letter till tomorrow morning & you won't get it till Saturday evening at earliest, I don't quite see how you could come even if you wanted to. We said that you would

probably have too much to do.
Shall you come & stay with
us all the same? Clive
may be going to stay here till
~~Sat~~ ~~Wednesday~~ Thursday. but
I anyhow shall come back
on Wednesday. Mr Ball is
away & comes back on Wed.
nesday, so Clive may have to
stay to see him, but I think
I wonder also what you are
going to do about Boxwood.
It is blazing hot here &
wish you were in the country.
If it weren't for the Balls it
would really be very nice.
As it is I think things are
improved by Mr Ball's absence.

I have had no news from anyone & have nothing to say unless I utter complaints about family life & stupidity - but that as you know I am debarred from doing - The family has now I suppose gone to pray about the crucifixion or whatever event it was that took place today. It will mean probably a Sunday mid-day dinner today & a cold supper tonight. Oh God - the same thing will be repeated in two days time. On Monday night we dine with the Raven Hills - no one glimpse of civilized society but it will be spilt because Lorna & Dorothy are coming too. Dorothy appears to be no

better. in fact her nurse with whom I always somehow have a confidential conversation thinks her if anything worse; but does not say so to the Bells. It sounds to me rather serious as apparently she can't go on like this without getting worse or better. & at present she certainly is not getting better.

Well. Billy wont it be exciting when we set off on our travels again. & wont you be glad that you arent being left behind? It would have been too melancholy to leave you off leaving you in tears alone with your bald face all shiny & streaky. Wouldn't it? but I get quite muddled.

Yours
VB.

(Caroline Emelia Stephen d. 7 Apr. 1909)

(48)

Cleeve House

10 April 1909

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury.

Saturday.

VS

She would weep over us as she in our prayers.

My Billy.

No letter from you by either post today - why don't you write? I have only had one scant post-card from you since we've been here. & no news of your plans or anything. I saw the Quakers death in the Times today - which makes it all the odder that I don't hear from you. I

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hope I shall tomorrow
morning. I suppose you
have heard from Katharine.
I have had no letters
at all. I don't know what
is said about here. For
the days are monotonous
to a degree. Clive is very
happy sitting in the sun
like a salamander. I have
spent most of today wondering
why I don't hear from you

& consoling myself by the
reflection that Sopley would
probably let me know if
you had influenza or anything
else. Clive suggests that you
may have gone to to Cam-
bridge but I think it highly
improbable.

I feel that I am writing
in a rather complaining
spirit. But really you don't
know how much me
depends upon small things
here. Like all Stephens
as we said the other day.

my sense of proportion gets
lost in solitude - for here
one is practically in solitude
as far as anything one
wants from one's fellow-
creatures goes. I hardly see
Clive alone - & besides I feel
that we are both oppressed
by the family weight. I
know that according to you
I am too much oppressed by
it: but I can't help it. Also
I feel really sorry that the
Quaker is dead - she was for
the best of our relations - & a
link with the past as they say.
I somehow always thought that I

(49)

Clevedon House.

Easter 1909

46, Gordon Square,
Bloomsbury. 11 April Sunday.

My Billy.

Thanks so much. I had a long letter from you this morning. It was written on Friday but not posted till Saturday, which accounts for my not getting it yesterday. I am glad you came to your senses in time & didn't wait till you were established at St Malo & think how much happier you'd be in Florence. Adrian with

find Walter Lamb at Venice,
but I suppose he would depress
the atmosphere for him as
he would for you or me.
You seem to be very suc-
cessful in your career
I suppose you will get
well paid for these essays
& they ought to be amusing
to do. Are you now
paying attention to the
clothes you will want for
Florence? Of course it
will really be right to be

very hot - so tell summer things - Perhaps your perennial manner of Kirtle will reappear. Your scarf sounds as if it would set the Thames on fire.

We went to tea with old Mr Dickens today & met a Mr Wallace - who I believe talked to Clive about the brilliant article in the Times on the Carlyles* & the very clever writer Virginia Stephen - but I was talking to Mr Dickens & did not hear. Clive sends love like lots of us.

*[TLS. 1st Apr. 1909]

You'll be glad to hear that Julian is now thought to be very like you - Are you flattered? I believe there really is some likeness to the photograph of you as a chubby baby. Let's hope he'll improve upon later stages. We have only two more days here. What a blessing. Will you dine with us on Wednesday night? I pre. sume also you are coming to stay on Thursday - or Wednesday if you like. You probably won't hear from me again as you will get this this Tuesday. Yours v. T.

T. PARSONS 3.2.73